

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR.

DEAR EDITOR,

Although we are all so busy owing to the near approach of the examinations, we feel we cannot allow the first number of the Magazine to come out without giving you some account of this term's work. During the month of October we had some very interesting rambles with Miss Hodgson and Mr. Waterfall, an able botanist who was staying in Ambleside. We found several new plants, amongst which was the Scaly-back Fern, which has not hitherto been seen in the neighbourhood, also the Bladder-wort, the one English specimen of the Pitcher Plant. We are sending a list of fruits and flowers for October, as we have found a greater number than usual so late in the year.

Mrs. Firth has been giving us a most delightful course of "Talks" on Architecture, leading us up from Greek to Early Italian Art.

Miss Mason has started a Literary Society, which meets here every alternate Tuesday evening, for the benefit of the out-going seniors. Each member in turn chooses a favourite author and reads selections therefrom, which are then discussed.

We have had two visitors this term: Dr. Helen Webb, who gave us some most interesting hints on health, and Mrs. Baynes, who spoke most sympathetically to us on "Woman and her Work." We enjoyed their visits very much.

Miss Mason is giving us a great opportunity of acquiring French. She has engaged a Swiss lady, who is giving the seniors four hours daily for three weeks.

We are all pleased with the Magazine and hope it will prosper and be helpful to us. We should like to answer one writer's question with regard to *Greek Lives*. She seemed to find a difficulty in fixing dates, as her knowledge of Greek History is limited. Miss Mason suggests that a chart be drawn up and that each event, as it occurs, be represented by some symbol. She also advises the teacher to provide herself with Dr. Smith's *Shorter History of Greece*, price 3/6.

With best wishes for the New Year from all here, we are,

Yours truly,
THE STUDENTS OF THE HOUSE OF EDUCATION,
AMBLESIDE.

DEAR EDITOR,

In answer to the enquiry of one of our members as to what books are helpful in giving some knowledge of the surroundings of the men of whom we read in Plutarch's *Greek Lives*, let me say that I find Dr. Schmitz *History of Greece* (Longman) a good book for teachers, though somewhat too full in detail. In our schoolroom we have a table of ancient dates framed and hung up, and find it very useful for reference. The dates are of course given roughly.

B.C.	
2800	Pyramids.
2000	Abraham.
1800	Joseph.
1500	Moses.
1350	Lesostris, Rameses the Great.
1300	Ninus.
1250	Hercules Theseus, Argonauts.
1200	Siege of Troy.
1100	Samuel.
1050	Saul, David, Codrus.
1000	Solomon.
900	Homer.
888	Lycurgus.
770	Olympic Games.
753	Rome founded.
594	Solon, Cræsus.
558	Cyrus.
529	Cambyses.
521	Darius, Hystaspis.
534	Tarquin.
490	Battle of Marathon (Miltiades). Xerxes.
480	Battle of Thermopylæ (Leonidas). Battle of Salamis (Themistocles).
333	Alexander the Great.

For other histories the *Story of the Nations* series is truly delightful (there is one upon *Alexander's Empire*). Of course everyone knows Church's books: *The Story of the Persian War*, *Roman Life in the days of Cicero*, *Stories from Greek Tragedies*, etc. These are very pleasant reading, though not so satisfactory in affording a "setting" for certain characters as a real history book.

For general reading I should like to mention the *Gentleman of*

France by Stanley Weyman (is there anyone who has not read it?) and *Off the Skelwigs* by Jean Ingelow, both of which are most interesting. Canon Rawnsley's *Reminiscences of the Lake District* will also give as much pleasure to others as it has given to me, I am sure.

The *Memoirs of Marcus Aurelius* I am now perusing, and find it a treasure (it may be bought for about 1/-).

VIOLET PARKER.

DEAR EDITOR,

Some of our readers may be interested in the following article:—
The coronation stone which now stands in Westminster Abbey has an interesting history attached to it, with which perhaps some of my readers are acquainted. Part of its history is known with certainty, and part is uncertain, but harmonizes well with what is known about it. We will try and trace its history backwards. Every child who learns English History knows that this stone was brought from Scone in Scotland by King Edward III., who placed it in the coronation chair in Westminster Abbey. It was regarded in Scotland with the greatest veneration, and was considered as sacred and as conferring prosperity upon the kings who were crowned upon it. Even as early as the time of the Irish Saint Columbus we learn something of the respect in which it was held. He requested that he might die with his head upon the stone. History tells us that when Fergus, who belonged to the Scoti tribe in Ireland, had conquered a part of Scotland and desired to be crowned king of his new possessions, he sent a message to Ireland to his brother, the King of Tara, requesting him to lend him the sacred stone called Lia Fail that he might be crowned upon it. His brother acceded to his request, and the stone having once arrived in Scotland was kept there. The name of the stone, Lia Fail, means "the stone of destiny." This name is partly an Irish word, but part of it is not Irish, it is Hebrew. This points to an Eastern origin for the stone, as also does the legend attached to it. It is related that at some time far distant in the past ages, some strangers were shipwrecked on the east coast of Ireland, amongst whom were a prophet and a princess. The prophet had under his

care a sacred stone, and taught that where this stone went a prosperous government should be set up. The prince of that part of the island fell in love with the beautiful princess, and having embraced her religion he took her to be his wife. This beautiful princess was supposed to be a daughter of Zedekiah, King of Judah, who was carried captive to Babylon, and the prophet who accompanied her, the Prophet Jeremiah. This is, of course, only conjecture. The last that we know of the Prophet Jeremiah is that he accompanied the remnant of the nation, including the king's daughter, into Egypt. A fact which lends countenance to this part of the history of the stone is that it is peculiar in its character and structure, there being none other like it in the British Isles. Now, if this history be true, our present Queen may claim descent from King David. She is descended from King James I. of England through his grand-daughter Elizabeth, who married a German prince. The Stuarts trace their genealogy from King Fergus, who was the first King of Scotland, and he in his turn was descended from the prince who married the beautiful princess from foreign parts. If she was the daughter of Zedekiah, then she was a descendant of David, and in that case Queen Victoria can claim a descent from David.

A. H. McNEILL.